

# RESEARCH NEEDS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MILITARY DEPLOYMENT HEALTH, A STRATEGIC PLAN, DRAFT, NOVEMBER 1997

## Proponent

The proponents for this document are the Department of Defense (Health Affairs), Veterans Administration, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

## Web Site Location

This document is not on the world wide web. The document may be reviewed in the USACHPPM Plans and Integration Office.

## Definition

*Research Mission - The United States Government will develop and maintain an integrated and coordinated interagency research program leading to ongoing improvements in assessment, prevention, intervention, and treatment of illnesses and injuries to which service members may be at risk as a result of deployment experiences.*

## Synopsis

The purpose of the research strategy described in this document is to develop a sharper and more targeted focus on research that will ultimately lead to improvements in the long-term health status of members of the military who are deployed to different parts of the world to carry out the military mission of the United States.

The research strategy broadly focuses on four areas:

1. assessments of deployment-related health outcomes;
2. assessments of deployment-related exposures;
3. research on relationships between deployment-related exposures; and
4. research on high priority deployment-related risk factors.

The plan describes objectives and strategies for the six goals:

1. the U.S. government will have the capability to systematically collect population-based demographic and health data to enable longitudinal evaluation of the health of all service personnel (Active Duty, Reservist, National Guard) throughout their military career and after leaving military service;
2. the U.S. government will have the capability to collect and assess data associated with anticipated exposures during deployments;



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3. the U.S. government will have the capability to monitor deployments for the appearance of novel or unanticipated health threats and to quickly deploy assets to collect and assess data relevant to any newly identified threats;
4. the U.S. government will have the coordinated capability to use exposure and health outcome data to determine whether deployment-related exposures are associated with post-deployment health outcomes;
5. develop balanced research programs targeted at improved prevention, intervention, and treatment strategies for priority health risk factors; and
6. establish a wide-range of national and military collaborative research relationships to enhance these efforts.

## What Does This Mean for Military Public Health?

Preventive medicine is a comprehensive program to protect the health and environment of military personnel. We have unique expertise at the USACHPPM in our matrixed teams of scientific and engineering disciplines. In order for preventive medicine to prepare for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must:

- ◆ optimize the use of technology to obtain, evaluate, and disseminate preventive medicine information;
- ◆ develop and improve our capability to collect, integrate, store, analyze, report and transmit assessment data to track total force health. This is critical for military leaders; it is the foundation for force protection. A comprehensive military health surveillance system establishes a template and process for achieving this objective; and
- ◆ work with the research community to identify operational preventive medicine research requirements and develop solutions to these requirements;

The following are themes common to other documents on our list.

- ◆ assist with the development of a Joint service approach in identifying and addressing the health promotion and preventive medicine needs of commanders, especially the CINCs;
- ◆ assist the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Center and School in developing solutions to address lessons learned and doctrine, training, leader development, organization, materiel, and soldiers (DTLOMS) deficiencies to meet the challenges of Joint Vision 2010; and
- ◆ USACHPPM could serve as a center of excellence for the full spectrum of health promotion and preventive medicine services in managing the health of our soldiers and beneficiaries.